

Safeguarding Policy



Safety and Rights Society

Title of Policy: Safeguarding Policy

Main Policy: Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)

Adopted by: Safety and Rights Society (SRS)

Approved By: Governing Body of SRS

Approval Date: 05 October 2019

Table of Contents

Sl. No.	Topic	Page
	Approval	2
	Table of Content	3
1.	Purpose	4
2.	Strategic Context	4
3.	Definitions	5
4.	Recruitment	8
5.	Expectations from Employees	8
6.	Safeguarding Training	9
7.	Safeguarding Officer	9
8.	Prevention of Abuse	9
9.	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	10
10.	Commitment	11
11.	Reporting and Responding Procedure	12
12.	Support to Survivors	14
13.	Decision on the Next Step	14
14.	Decision on the Outcome	15
15.	Learning and Improving	15
Annex	Acknowledgement Form	16
	ToR for Safeguarding Officer	17

Safeguarding Policy

1. Purpose

This Policy aims to set out approaches and procedures to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults by the Safety and Rights Society (SRS). The purpose of this policy and its subsequent procedures are to outline a clear framework to protecting and safeguarding children, young people and adults so that all staff and those working on behalf of the select; Group are aware of their roles and responsibilities in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

2. Strategic Context

SRS is committed to provide an environment free from discrimination and harassment, where all individuals, staffs and other stakeholders are treated with respect and dignity and have equal opportunities at all level. Safeguarding does safe SRS's approach, practice and culture to a comprehensively safe environment for all people that the organization engages with.

3. Definitions

SRS has adopted following definitions for the purpose of this policy:

Bullying

It is often described as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed as certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability. It can happen anywhere, including school, university and in the work place. Bullying can take many forms including, name calling, damaging belongings, making things up to get someone into trouble, threats, intimidation, stealing money, posting insulting messages, or rumours on the internet etc.

Child:

Every human being below the age of 18 years

Persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Safeguarding

Taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

Safeguarding children:

- Protect children from maltreatment;
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective; care;

Take actions to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding vulnerable adults:

- Protect rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;
- Work together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect;
- Make sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action;

Sexual Exploitation

Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual Harassment

Any action or comment known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome to the recipient with sexual overtones either direct or indirect notions.

Sexual harassment includes:

1. Unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication) as physical contact and advances.

2. Demand or request for sexual favours
3. Sexually coloured remark or gesture
4. Showing pornography

Staff:

Anyone who works for SRS. This is to include directly or indirectly employed staff, trustees, contractors, consultants, Field facilitator, care in charge, volunteers and interns.

Vulnerable Adults

Women, persons with disabilities, dalits, people from ethnic communities, senior citizens, sick, refugees and whoever else may be recognized as vulnerable in any local, national or international context.

4. Recruitment

SRS undertakes specific background check for candidates for employment. As per the Human Resources and Development Policy, reference checks are obtained from previous employers and reference indicated in the personal history are kept in the respective staff's personal file. However, SRS is not authorized to carry out criminal background check of the candidates for any recruitment.

From now on, any one interviewed for a post with SRS, either internally or from outside the organization, will need to show an understanding of safeguarding that is relevant to the role that they are applying for.

5. Expectations from Employees

Everyone working for SRS has responsibilities to familiarize themselves with this safeguarding policy and the procedures thereof. They are expected to maintain a proper focus on the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults in all aspects of their work .

Anyone who works for the organization must inform their respective Supervisor/Manager if they or any adult living in their household become(s) the subject of an allegation involving a safeguarding concern or abuse against a child or vulnerable adult.

6. Safeguarding Orientation

SRS is committed to ensuring that everyone who works for the organization does understand their safeguarding responsibilities and do keep their knowledge up to date. All employees shall be provided safeguarding orientation within three months of joining.

7. Safeguarding Officer

SRS, from its senior staff members, will designate one Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer shall be responsible for implementation of this policy and related operational plan, and maintaining of the register of safeguarding.

8. Prevention of Abuse

Safeguarding of Children

SRS responsibility:

SRS staff and associated personnel shall not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18;
- Sexually abuse or exploit any child;
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect;
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.

Safeguarding of Adult

SRS's staff and associated personnel shall not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit the adults who is at risk
- Subject an adult who is at risk to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

9. Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

SRS staff and associated personnel shall not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;

Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics;

10. Commitment

As a part of safeguard policy SRS is committed on the following:

- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to sign of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children, women and persons with disabilities;
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern;
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored;
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals;
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation;
- Keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and process of dealing with them;
- Not tolerate possession or access to any material that is abusive towards children, women and persons with disabilities;
- Not engage children, women or persons with disabilities, in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts, where under the law(s) applicable to the child, the child is below the age of consent or the act(s) are an offence under relevant laws;
- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present with concerned staff member when working in the proximity of children;
- Not allow any of the staff members to invite unaccompanied children into their home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- Refrain staff members from physical punishment or discipline of children and from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.

11. Reporting and Responding Procedures

Reporting

If a staff member hears something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a safeguarding concern, they should report this to SRS's Safeguarding Officer.

Concerns

If a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to a staff member, the person receiving the report should bear the following in mind:

- Listen
- Empathize with the person
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why
- Repeat/ check the understanding of the situation
- Report to the appropriate staff member

Documentation

The person receiving the report should then document the following information, using an Incident Report Form if there is one:

- Name of person making report
- Name(s) of alleged survivor(s) of safeguarding incident(s) if different from above
- Name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s)
- Description of incident(s)
- Dates(s), times(s) and location(s) of incident

Forwarding

Any staff member receiving or coming across any information or alleged incident of abuse shall report to the Safeguarding Officer immediately or within 24 hours at the latest.

Confidentiality

Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality must be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only

12. Provide Support to Survivor where needed/requested

The Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with the senior management, will provide appropriate support to survivor(s) of safeguarding incidents, if requested. This will be in line with the operational plan.

Assessing protection or security risks

For reports relating to serious incidents: Safeguarding Officer will undertake an immediate risk assessment to determine whether there are any current or potential risks. Safeguarding Officer will continue to update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required.

13. Decision on the Next Steps

Safeguarding Officer decides the next steps. These could be (but not limited to)

- No further action (for example if there is insufficient information to follow up, or the report refers to incidents outside the organization's remit)
- Investigation is required to gather further information
- Immediate disciplinary action if no further information needed

If an investigation is required and the organization does not have internal capacity, SRS will identify resources to conduct the investigation.

14. Decision on Outcome of Investigation Report

Senior Management Team (SMT) will make a decision based on the information provided in the investigation report. Decisions relating to the Subject of Concern should be made in accordance with existing policies and procedures for staff misconduct.

If at this or in any stage in the process criminal activity is suspected, the case should be referred to the relevant authorities *unless this may pose a risk to anyone involved in the case*. In this case, the SMT together with other senior staff will need to decide on how to proceed. This decision should be made bearing in mind a risk assessment of potential protection risks to all concerned, including the survivor and the Subject of Concern.

In case of failure to act upon suspected or reported the victim will directly contact with the Ombudsperson.

The Safeguarding Officer will document all decisions made resulting from the case clearly and confidentially.

15. Learning and Improving

SRS, through implementation of this policy, is determined to keep improving knowledge and understanding of how best to protect children and vulnerable adults. It is to review related practices bi-annually to check whether it was effectively preventing and managing safeguarding in the work. The purpose of the reviews is to reflect on lessons about when the systems need to improve to protect children and adult in risk better in future.

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every two years.

Annex

**SRS Human Resources Management and Development Policy–
Acknowledgement Form**

Name of the Employee or Intern: _____

Position: _____

Department/Unit: _____

I have received, read and I fully understand all policies, guidelines and procedures included in the SRS Human Resources Manual.

In particular:

I have read the SRS Safeguarding Policy and I fully understand its contents. I do hereby confirm that I am in complete compliance with all provisions of the policy and that I will continue to observe the spirit of the commitment in all my activities on behalf of SRS. I will comply with the guidelines set out in these policies and understand that failure to do so might result in disciplinary or legal action.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Please sign and return to the HR Team. This document will be filed in the employee's or intern's personal file.